

## Updated Storm Forecast

Delta Winds very high, especially west

A few headline changes on our storm. First, the bulk of it strikes Saturday night. While conditions deteriorate during the afternoon/evening on Saturday, it's mainly the overnight hours and early Sunday morning that bring the heaviest rains and strongest winds. This is good because fewer people will be on the road. Highest surf and seas (at least for the coast from Mendocino to Monterey) will occur early Sunday.

Other change of note is that it may be a little less intense than forecast yesterday, with the low undergoing its most rapid intensification while still out to sea. It tracks a bit further south into central CA, sparing the far north coast some of the very high winds that had been predicted. So the upper coast will have southeast winds, not as damaging, with the low passing to their south.

Big winner in terms of snow will be the southern Sierra. As has happened many times this winter, the track has been more favorable for that region than the central Sierra (Yuba through Merced). Case in point, snow water equivalents look like this:

North	114%	28"
Central	98%	25"
South	113%	23"

While the inches are not highest in the south, the percentages are more robust. Southern Sierra snow totals will range from 4-5.5', elsewhere 3-4'. Snow levels in the Sierra will rise to around 6,000' during the day Saturday, then fall to 3,500' or 4,000' early Sunday. Sierra winds will not be extreme, as the center of the low impacts the coast as it is weakening, so the strongest winds will be at the coast, and on the east side of the coastal range. Sierra gusts go to 65mph.

The Grapevine could pick up a bit of snow Sunday afternoon, as southern CA will have a later onset of stormy conditions. Burn areas in southern CA are at risk during each storm, but excessive rainfall in a short period of time is not expected in those locations this go-round. They had a soaking of rain already this morning.

Contrary to the Sac Bee story, I wouldn't say the winds in the Sac area will get to 70mph. I'd commit to my original 40mph steady, with gusts to 50 around town, maybe a bit more. Many places will fare worse than Sacramento. The duration of the wind is the problem, and those speeds are nothing to sneeze at. (In fact, sneeze is exactly what most of us are doing this winter.) There is a 24 hr. period of time that trees or power lines being downed is a possibility somewhere in the northern 2/3rds of the state.

The length of time that we will be vulnerable to very high (although not extreme) winds is the characteristic of note this weekend. Much of California (including the coasts, Redding to Marysville area, and Delta, especially west) will have 12-18 hours of steady 35-45+ mph winds, with bigger gusts possibly to 60mph. That puts stress on Delta

levees, especially those vulnerable to a south wind, which will be the direction of the strongest and longest lasting winds from 4pm Sat- 7am Sun there.

Coastal surf will be high, picking up to combined sea and swell heights of 20-25' on Sunday morning. For more on the latest watches, warnings and advisories (which are numerous for this weekend and will be changing over time), please go to:

<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/cnrfc/warnings.php>

With the southeasterly flow more predominant due to the position of the low, the east side of the coastal range will get the best orographically enhanced precip. Rainfall amounts there could be quite heavy, so creeks and streams (eg. Cottonwood to Cache Creek) may see good inflow/ rises.

Mainstem rivers remain low, and reservoir flood control space is more than enough for what is coming in.

Agencies will monitor this system in coming days. It will not be as windy as the early January storm. Nor will rainfall amounts be as heavy.

Duration of these high wind conditions will range from 12-16 hours, perhaps not 18-24. But a storm is heading our way, no doubt. Check out the satellite:

[http://www.cnrfc.noaa.gov/satellite/epac\\_enhanced\\_ir.php](http://www.cnrfc.noaa.gov/satellite/epac_enhanced_ir.php)

After this quiets throughout the day Sunday, we are done for a while.

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